

*Albertus Brown*  
A LIFE OF ENDURING SERVICE



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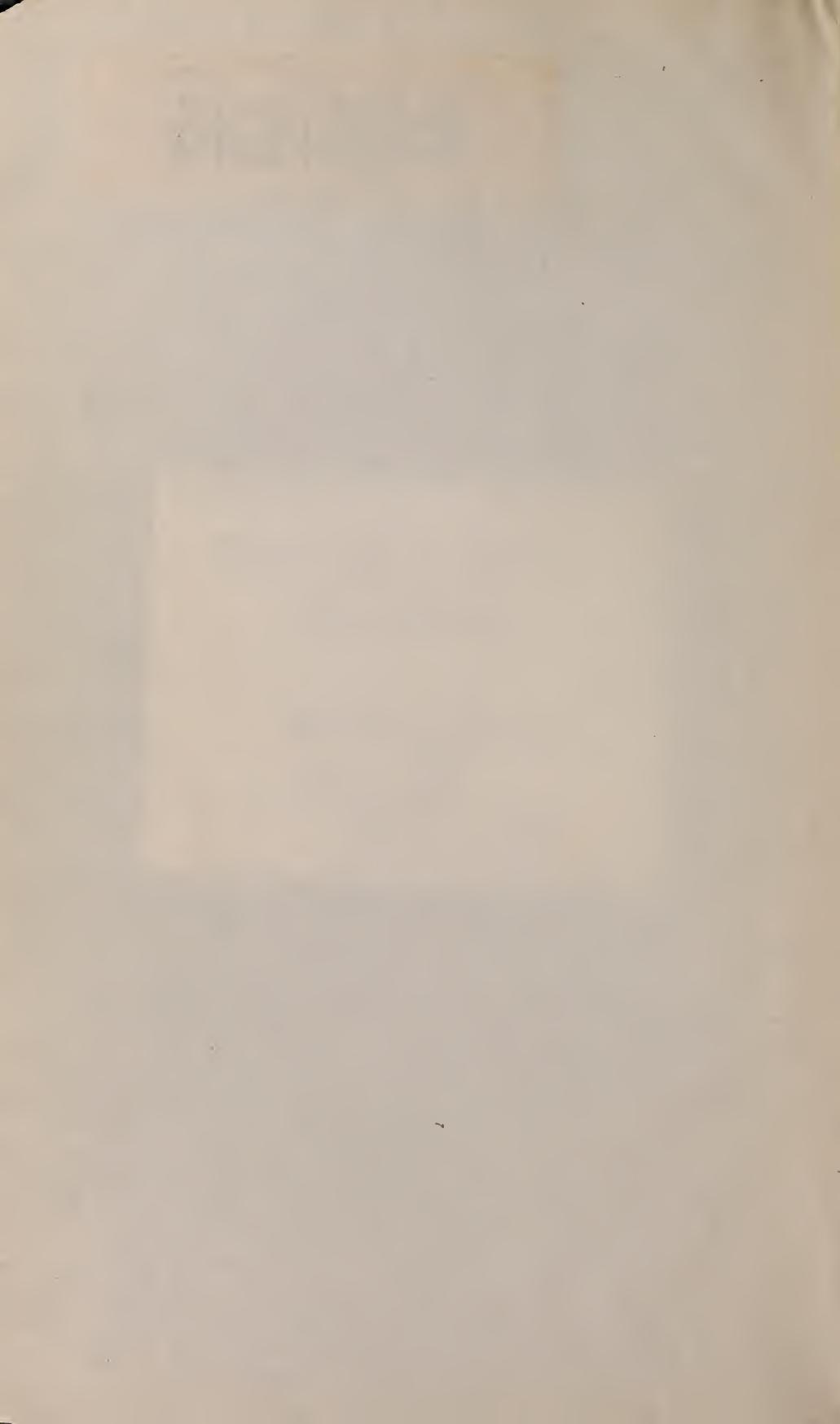
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# Albertus Brown

AN APPRECIATION AND FAREWELL



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FREDERICK DOUGLASS COMMUNITY CENTER

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*Albertus Brown*

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# Albertus Brown

Washington is the Capital of the United States, and is a most useful city, and will be so in a brief time.

It is a large city.

It is a good city.

It is a safe city.

It is a healthy city.

It is a happy city.

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# *Albertus Brown*

FROM newsboy in the Capital of the United States to one of the first and most useful citizens of his city of adoption in a brief time.

Able lawyer.

Devoted husband.

Loyal friend.

Soul of integrity.

Unimpeachable character.

Militant and faithful champion of his people.

In the crucible of character his suffering itself was transmuted into song.

His was a triumph of spirit over conditions.

His was a life of courage undiminished.

His was a life of individual power guiding his own destiny.

Give me high noon—and let it then be night

Thus would I go.

When he gave most to Elks, Masons, his profession and his people, Frederick Douglass Community Center—then, like a tune-swept fiddle string that feels the master melody and snaps—he was called by God.

## HIS CREED

To think without confusion clearly,  
To love his fellow-men sincerely,  
To act from honest motives purely,  
To trust in God and Heaven securely.

(TOLEDOANA)

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Local history

ORDER OF SERVICES  
FOR  
ALBERTUS BROWN

MUSIC

1. Nearer My God to Thee:  
Douglass Center Glee Club
2. Invocation:  
Major W. T. Anderson  
Dr. T. D. Scott
3. Joe Murphy's Ice House Quartet
4. Obituary:  
Mrs. Della Fields
5. Remarks:  
(a) Mr. Grove Patterson  
(b) Mr. John Dancey  
(c) Judge Aaron B. Cohn  
(d) Mr. Jesse S. Heslip  
(e) Judge James A. Austin, Jr.
6. Poem:  
Mr. Lew Williams
7. Solo:  
Mrs. Ruby Slaughter
8. Fraternal Ceremonies

ALBERTUS BROWN

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For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face.—Matthew 11-10.

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God hath a holy purpose wise in every rose that blooms,  
A cause for every living blade of grass upon the sward;  
A reason for the glory of the blossoms' rare perfumes,  
For every drop of honey that within their hearts are stored.

God hath a reason in each bird that wings across the sky,  
Each tiny grain of sand below the deepest troubled sea,  
A motive in the cooling breeze, the stars that glorify,  
All have a meaning in His plan of human destiny.

God hath a purpose when He gives to earth a real man,  
A creature He hath fashioned from some rare and precious clay,  
To serve, to bless, to comfort, to fulfill the Father's plan,  
To cheer the road of mortal life and light the darkened way.

God knew our need and gave to us this brother and this friend,  
His labor and his ministry is done, his work is through,  
And while his mission and his counsel sees its earthly end,  
We know somewhere in heaven there is work for him to do.

Farewell dear friend and well we know God's reasoning is best,  
Thou leavest us and yet we know for thee 'tis not the end,  
Keep but this thought, a living spark, within thy silent breast,  
Because you lived, Albertus Brown, we all are better men.

*Lew Williams*

## BIOGRAPHY

Albertus Brown, son of Harrison and Caroline (Hess) Brown, was born September 17, 1880, in Washington, D. C., and was educated in the grade schools, high schools and Howard University Law School, of Washington. During his grade school years he sold newspapers on the streets, by which means he supported and clothed himself.

While in high school opportunity presented itself and he became a messenger in the Republican National Committee, serving the Hon. M. A. Hanna, and later, Col. Charles Dick, in the capacity of clerk and stenographer. He was in Chicago with Senator Herrick during the second McKinley campaign.

In 1901 he entered the night Law School of Howard University, and was graduated in 1904. After the death of Mr. Hanna, he served Senator Dick, looking after all pension matters effecting Ohio soldiers, and had charge of special pension bills and bills to collect military and naval records in Congress.

In 1901 Mr. Brown went to Toledo, Ohio, and there began the practice of Law, having already been admitted to the bar at Washington, D. C., and in the state of Ohio. Later he was admitted to practice before the United States Supreme Court for the Northern District of Ohio.

In 1912 he was married to Miss Jessie Watts, of Dayton, Ohio.

During the administration of Mayor Charles Milroy, he represented the Race on a Civic Commission, appointed by the Mayor. Also served as Police Judge for two days in Oct. 1916, by appointment by Mayor Milroy. In 1919 he founded the Frederick Douglass Community Center for boys and girls, and the funds for this worthy project were secured from both colored and white friends of the Race.

He organized the Toledo branch of the N. A. A. C. P. and served as president for two years, was also connected with the Redress Committee of that organization. He was a member of Golden Rule Lodge of Elks, of Toledo, and served in the capacity of Treasurer and Chairman of the Building Committee, was a member of Toledo Museum of Art, and of Gamma Lambda Chapter, Alpha Phi Alpha, of Detroit, Michigan.

In 1926 he was awarded the News-Bee Achievement Award in recognition of his work in behalf of the Race, chiefly through the Frederick Douglass Community Association.

He died July 17th, 1927.

## ADDRESSES OF SPEAKERS AT FUNERAL SERVICES OF ALBERTUS BROWN

### MR. GROVE PATTERSON:

The great Scotchman, Sir James M. Barrie, I think it is, told us that God gives us memory that we might have roses in December, and long after these roses have withered the memory of the man to whom we pay tribute today will remain fresh in the minds of a great circle of friends.

To me, the life of Albertus Brown was an inspiration, because laboring against a great handicap, he gave value to his own life by what he did for himself and what he did for others. By his efforts, not through inheritance, not through position which he inherited by birth or by race, but by personal efforts he gave value to his life and that is the message it seems to me above all others that I would like to leave in a very few minutes. The value of the individual and the fact that that value must be made despite whatever the circumstances of life by what we do by and for ourselves.

It is related that when Robert Louis Stevenson came back to the Island of Samoa, from which he had been banished for a short period, the natives of that Island, wishing to pay an especial tribute to one whom they loved very much, made a pathway of flowers all the way from the landing of the boat to the door of the little cottage where Mr. Stevenson lived, and forever after, in the very beautiful native language, they called it "The way of the heart," and I have the feeling that there has been laid down in the City of Toledo, a way of the heart which has become a road of better understanding between the races, and I am sure that no man who has lived in our time has put more roses in that pathway, has laid more flowers on the way of the heart, than Albertus Brown, and I think it will always stay and be kept fresh because of our sense of recognition of the great value that his life had in this community.

I had the opportunity over a great many years of being associated with him in some of the work of the Douglass Community Center, though, as you all know, he did nearly all of the work himself, and it was his devotion to this great ideal which cost him in the end his life, but knowing this man, I would say that there were three characteristics which, it seems to me, were outstanding in his character. The first is "Vision." The second is "Courage" and the third is "Faith."

I think it was the Reverend Phillips Brooks who used to say, "There must be forever beating at the doors of a man's soul the wings of some great desire," and there were forever beating at the doors of Albertus Brown's soul, the wings of a desire to do something to help his people out, and he saw with the years of imagination long before it became even the beginning of a reality, the Douglass Community Center, and he saw it alone through the years, but he finally translated that vision into a reality which has meant immeasurably much to the people of his race in the Community, and that was Vision.

And, in the second place, he had Courage, the Courage which it takes for a man to adjust himself to the circumstances of his life. I think I perhaps have told some of you in this room the story of Mother Walker who kept the light house for so many years on Robins' Reef off the Eastern Coast, and she told her story not many years ago. She said "My husband brought me to this little lonely light house when I was a bride." She said, "I hated the place." I said, "I won't stay here, I won't unpack my trunk, my boxes, because I don't like it here. It is too lonely." "But," she said, "little by little, I began to help my husband in the Light and one day he fell sick with pneumonia, and they took him over to the main land and one night as I was up here in the

Light, I heard voices coming up off the face of the water, 'Your husband is worse,' the voices said. I said, 'He is dead.' And they took him over and buried him over on the main land and in the winter, the soils are white with snow and in the fall they are brown, and in the spring they are green, but I can see his grave from up here, and every day I seem to get a message from it and this is the thing I hear him say, 'Mind the Light, mind the Light'; and so it is going to be up to those who succeed Albertus Brown to keep the light which illuminated his life, and through him, illuminate the lives of others.

But we are not responsible for all the circumstances with which we are borne into the world but we are responsible for the manner of our adjustment to those circumstances. Albertus Brown's life was a triumph of adjustment to difficult circumstances and that is Courage.

And the third of those outstanding qualities, it seems to me, which he possessed, is Faith, for the constant belief that people would come to think as he thought, to see as he saw, and have Vision as he had Vision, and Faith has been defined not as the substance of things hoped for, but as giving substance of things hoped for and Albertus Brown had the kind of Faith which in practical reality gave substance to conditions in life to the end hoped for, and so he had Vision, and he had Courage, and he had Faith, and he has not labored in vain.

We say he died while he is yet a comparatively young man, but if we believe there is any such thing as Immortality in the Universe, that Immortality has begun with each one who offers of his heart and knowledge and Life goes on in some form which we cannot understand, but it goes on and it is a continuous thing.

In closing, may I recall the words spoken by a great writer, the late F. Marion Crawford, in paying tribute to a distinguished man of the Nineteenth Century. He said, "Such men fight the campaigns of the future over and over in thought while all the world around them is at rest, but when the time comes at last though they themselves be gone, the roads they planned are broad and scraped for the march of other feet." This is the story of Albertus Brown, "the sword they forged lays ready for another to carry and they themselves in their graves, in their well-earned rest, have a share in the factors that humanize mankind."

I thank you.

#### MR. JOHN DANCEY:

In the passing of Albertus Brown, a man whom I have known for a number of years, twenty or more, having known him in my early youth, I do know that Toledo, and the United States, for that matter, have all had a huge loss, because Albertus Brown was a man who meant much to the good of Toledo, the good of the Negroes in Toledo and the good of the Negroes everywhere, because his life has spread out over a broad area, and his loss will be felt by us all.

I knew Bert Brown long before he ever came to Toledo. I knew him when he was in the government service years ago. Since he has been here and I have lived in Detroit, I have seen him frequently. He never made a trip to Detroit that he did not come to my house or to my office. It is a difficult thing to ask me to say something now that he is gone.

I once told him the story of Countee Cullen. Countee Cullen is one of the most noted of Negro poets. He was touched by that story and he said that he wanted the Frederick Douglass Center to reach out, touch every Negro child in this community so that there would be no possible opportunity lost, that there would be no flower born to blush unseen and lose its fragrance on

the desert air, so that was the spirit of Albertus Brown. That was the spirit that characterized his work. His spirit will live on. People in Toledo will appreciate as the days go on just what his value was to this community. There is no getting away from that.

Every child, if he had his way, would have a chance and an opportunity to develop themselves and make something out of themselves.

He tried to so conduct himself so that he could weld together the various racial groups of this city. He wanted to have the white people and the Negro people mingle together and understand one another and understand one another's common problems and I think judging by what you have heard that he achieved to some degree the things he aimed to do.

I can say little more but I can say this: Bert Brown has done a wonderful work in Toledo, he has done a wonderful work for Negro people through this Country all over. If you do not believe he was a strong man, a courageous man who had faith in his fellow-men, you should have seen him around at some of the great gatherings where I have seen him, where I have seen him on his feet, and any time he was on his feet, opposed to some other person, no matter what the thing at stake, you could depend on it that Bert Brown would come out on top, because he was a powerful fellow, reasoned clearly, thought well, made up his mind and honored today.

I thank you.

#### JUDGE AARON B. COHN:

If, upon this occasion, we are unduly sad or sentimental, or too superlative, we would be untrue to the spirit of Albertus Brown. I told him just a few months ago that I wished for the opportunity to interpret his life to a group of his fellow citizens. Now when he has gone to join the innumerable caravan, I want to pay tribute to him. His senses are stilled and his heart cannot be warmed. What then, is the purpose of these testimonials—they are for the family—for the living, a word picture to emulate.

As a judge of a Court where Albertus Brown practiced, and as a co-worker in civic activities, I have received definite impressions of him. He must have sensed my genuine liking and understanding of his life—because he often brought his intimate problems to me. In those instances, I caught real pictures of this man. There are three great attributes that stand out in the life of this great citizen. Integrity, Loyalty and Courage.

Integrity. As a lawyer, he practiced largely in criminal cases in Municipal and Common Pleas Court. He was daily in contact with temptations that would try most men's souls. He associated with clients, brother lawyers, police, detectives, judges, etc., in such a manner that he earned for himself a reputation second to none. This has been said of him, "He is a horse for work." "He is on the job." "His word is as good as his bond." "He is on the square."

Loyalty. Loyal to home and family by strenuous labor to provide well for them. Loyal to self in lifting this former newsboy to one of the most respected citizens of his community. Loyal to his profession, by honoring it. Loyal to his friends by giving to them of the rich store of unqualified friendship. He never straddled a fence. He was either for you or against you and looked into your eyes and told you and gave a reason which usually was a superior or prior loyalty. Last but not least by far, Loyalty to his race. This loyalty found expression in being its champion. He was the champion of his people with diplomacy, with persuasive oratory, with a shining example, or with a militant defense or offense. Doing battle for justice, not favor. This last Loyalty found expression, actual expression, in the Frederick Douglass Center—the child of his creation and his constant thought and worry.

Some suitable and permanent monument shall have an abiding place here for Albertus Brown.

Courage. A God given quality. That quality that has its home in the spirit in the soul. It is courage that makes heroic giants of men who physically would be counted frail. Albertus Brown had not been well for years, but he drove that body and mind to its uttermost. He set a pace of work and diligence that few could equal. No one ever heard him complain. He did not discuss his ill health. He was a Spartan in capacity to endure suffering.

His was a triumph of Spirit over conditions. His was a life of courage undiminished. His was a life of individual power guiding his own destiny.

Ladies and Gentlemen, when the sun goes down in the golden west, there is a glow that lives long after. So it is with Albertus Brown. He has passed on, but his spirit lives and will live through the lives of men who will serve this institution, the Frederick Douglass Center, his race, his city and his name.

I thank you.

#### MR. JESSE HESLIP:

No one can doubt that this community has not become a better community through the life of our friend, Albertus Brown.

Albertus Brown's religion was one of service. Some may undertake to mispronounce it and call it Selfishness but that undertaking would be based upon rank prejudice or strict ignorance. Near the middle of his career, as an attorney in this City, when he had acquired sufficient wealth to live in peaceful retirement, when he had achieved more than the ordinary and average honor of an attorney at the bar, when he had placed upon him the respect, sympathy and aid of the bench, if Albertus Brown had been a selfish man, he would have retired to comfort and ease, but looking out over the community and seeing the need of an institution that would bring together boys and girls, men and women, and he brought up this institution, this emblem of his life, this tribute to his soul and to his race and to his nation, where characters might be molded and service rendered. Not only did he serve this community in a moral and civic and a professional way but in the Golden Rule Lodge of Elks of this City he had very progressive, constructive ideas, which he incorporated in the program of his life of service. "Rather than be a tenant of someone else," he said to the group, "acquire a piece of ground of our own," and as a result of his talk and his preachings and his work, that lodge will soon be ready to start building its own Elks' Home. That was true of his career in other fraternal orders of which he was a member.

Some have attempted to say that the religion of a man must always be shown by some connection with a Church. I believe that the life of Albertus Brown, a life of service, a life of aid, a life of frankness, a life of intelligence, would represent to any reasonable group of people or any reasonable man the embodiment of Christian religion. I did not look upon him as an individual, more than being an individual in a friendly way, but when I looked upon him as a citizen, I found within him the embodiment of an institution. We know how near this institution was to his heart, and I believe that I can truthfully say that this institution and his desire and his material efforts to bring it up to the place that he wanted it to be is largely responsible for us being here today to say words of tribute to him.

If he had preferred that selfish career of retiring into comfort and ease, probably we would not be here, but choosing rather that Christian unselfish career for himself and not sitting down depending on a few to work with him, but organizing and carrying on the work as he knew it should be carried

on and as few others could carry it on like him, he has fallen and we are here on this occasion.

I knew him very intimately. We practiced together at the Bar. Oft-times we were together on the same side of a case. Many times he was on one side and it happened that I was on the other, but his combat was always honorable, friendly, vigorous and just. No one, I don't believe, can say of Albertus Brown, that he ever took an undue advantage of an individual or a situation. He was a friend to me. He assisted in directing my course to a large extent. There never was a time that I asked him for advice that he was too busy to stop and give it. There never was a time that I asked him to take charge of a matter for me when I was absent that he ever failed. My friends, that is the character that rests here today.

"A kinder heart ne'er throbbed with mortal breath,  
Or a truer friend life's pathway never trod,  
A nobler life was never quenched in death,  
A purer spirit never met its God."

#### JUDGE JAMES A. AUSTIN, JR.:

Albertus, for many years my honored neighbor and ever since we first got acquainted, one of my dearest friends, as I have sat here today listening to these words of eulogy that have been uttered in your behalf, I am reminded of a little conversation that we had only a few days ago when I first found that you had been taken to your bed by sickness. Albertus and I sat there together, talking about some things in general, and it was only a very short time before his attention was drawn to the matter of the Frederick Douglass Community Center. I had been with him in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, being one of its charter members, I was with him at the Foundation of this Frederick Douglass Community Center, and I believe today that Albertus would rather have me say something which I think would be his message to you rather than to eulogize him, because he did have this place in his mind, and for a good many months past, when he would walk down the alley, giving his favorite dog a little exercise, we would hob-nob over the back of our fences and almost invariably after we had talked a few moments, something came up about the Frederick Douglass Community Center and it seems very fitting to me that he should be here today.

Albertus is here. The house that held his soul has fallen down and weakened, but I believe he is here, Friends, and I believe that Albertus is here and he knows what we are saying, and he is interested in this occasion, and he wants the right thing to be done.

One thing I liked about Albertus, he was an Idealist, but he always kept his feet on the ground. He knew men as they were. He had his dreams of accomplishments but he knew that the only way to get them was in a practical way. Albertus was self-reliant. I want to say here, and I believe he would say the same thing to me and to you, that what he accomplished and what he asked for, he never asked for as a Negro, and he never accomplished as a Negro, but he accomplished it because he was a man. He never asked me for a favor for a client or a favor for himself on the ground of color or race. If his client was right, he asked it as a right. And he didn't ask to be judged as a lawyer by his face or race, but to be judged as a lawyer by his ability as such, and I want to say to you, if it were not for the fact that his skin were darker than most of ours, there is hardly any height in the legal profession in this town that Albertus Brown might not have reached.

He didn't ask for things because he was a Negro, that was a handicap to him, but in spite of all these things, he asserted himself as a man and won respect and honor because he did it on his own merit.

I think some people have misunderstood Albertus. Some people have looked upon him, as my friend has intimated, as irreligious because he did not associate himself perhaps with any religious organization. Albertus used to come over to my church several times and we would walk home together and talk over things and I know that Albertus was a deeply religious man but in our talk about the Community Center the idea of attaching it to some other organization, religious organization, that had been established, he always referred to his view point, that he wanted his race to stand on their own feet, he did not want the Frederick Douglass Community Center to be a white man's gift to his race. He wanted it to show that the colored people could do for themselves. That was an example of his spirit and his self-reliance and he thought it would handicap this institution if it was tied up with any church organization or any group of churches as an organization. He wanted it where there would be an uplift and a help to every colored person, no matter what his creed might be, or if he were absolutely creedless. Friends, I know that was his feeling. It was not because he had anything against any religion or any church, but here was the place he wanted people to be absolutely free, but he wanted all the teachings, all the developments of this institution to be on a sound, moral basis.

Yes, Albertus, I like to think of you, and when I think of you hereafter, your face will be as white as mine, because I will think of you hereafter always as a man, because when we met together, Albertus and I talked things over of the most intimate nature and the difference in color never seemed to exist between us. It was heart to heart, and man to man. The last talk I had with him, his fear was he knew himself the sacrifices that had to be made to carry on this institution.

My friends, if you are friends of Albertus Brown, if you think he has done any good for this community or for your race, it is your duty to take up the torch and carry on. Carry on, that will be his message. "I have fallen by the way-side, but you, friends, carry on."

I just want to change the words of the poet a little bit. He has left an impression, he has given us an impression. He has given us an example of devotedness and all these other manly qualities, irrespective of race or color or anything else that has been mentioned by the other speakers, and I want you to bear this in mind; I will just change the words of the poet a little bit,

"So, when a real man dies,  
Though years beyond his ken,  
The light he leaves behind him,  
Shines upon the paths of men."



# THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC., OF TOLEDO, OHIO

16 North Tenth Street

## RESOLUTIONS

OF THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION  
ON THE DEATH OF THE PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER,  
ALBERTUS BROWN

"No life can be pure in its purpose, and strong in its strife, and all life not purer and stronger thereby."

That Death, come when he may, shall find us busily engaged in something which shall cast a blessing on the world, and rebound with one to our own breast, and tend to give to man some benefit, to God some praise, is an epitome of the life of our beloved President and co-worker, Albertus Brown.

He needs no words of ours in eulogy, The Frederick Douglass Community Center will ever stand as a living monument to his ability, his worth, and his abiding interest in the youth of the race.

He has builded a sure foundation, upon which to rear a super-structure dedicated to his memory.

Therefore, Be It Resolved, That while we sorrow at his passing, we shall take up the burden he has laid down, and carry it to full fruition, as a tribute to a matchless leader.

Be It Further Resolved, That a copy of these Resolutions be sent to the family, a copy given the press, and a copy written into the records of the Association.

### Committee:

Elnora Randolph,  
Everett Gatliff,  
Della H. Fields, Chairman.

## IN THE MUNICIPAL COURT OF TOLEDO, LUCAS COUNTY, OHIO

IN RE: MEMORIAL  
OF  
ALBERTUS BROWN,—LAWYER.

To the Honorable Judges, Officials, Officers, Attorneys and Friends,  
In the Fellowship with Albertus Brown.

After a pilgrimage of Forty-six (46) years in this world, Albertus Brown fell into that dreamless sleep that kisses down his eyelids still. We can bless his memory by saying:

"Lie down, helpful soul, and sleep,  
And no more measure  
The flight of time, nor weep  
The loss of leisure;  
But here, by this lone stream,  
Lie down with friends and dream  
Of starry treasure."

And you have deserved and worn the crown of the better life by living a beautiful creed,

"To do some good,  
To bear my ills without complaining,  
And press on as a brave man should  
For honors that are worth the gaining;  
To seek no profits where I may,  
By winning them bring grief to others;  
To do some service day by day  
In helping on my toiling brothers."

We need not review the events and achievements of his busy helpful life. 'Tis an open book to all. He was with us, and of us, and for us. He built a monument of honor and integrity,—and his word was his bond, and he left a beauteous character in the hearts of his friends and the results of its building in the hearts of his fellowmen. In our merrier get-together moods we were wont to drink a toast,—

Here is luck  
To the man I may never know,  
A man who takes my place  
When I do go,—

A week before Brownie passed outward, onward and upward and in the shadows of this receding world he selected the secretary who was to take his place in the Frederick Douglass Community Center that would carry on his great altruistic work, and was given to him to courageously know and God speed the man who was to take his place when he did go,—to that other country on the other side of the range.

Farewell, dear friend, this world is better for your life, the world is braver for your death. Farewell, we loved you living; we love you now; and we will take inspiration from your living the Master's command, "Serve Others" and we know and can say like you and with you,

"That through the years which lie ahead  
No heart shall ache, no cheek be wet,  
For any word that you have said  
Or profit you have tried to get."

And in men like Albertus Brown, character survives; goodness lives; love is immortal; and his hands that helped are as holy as the lips that prayed.

Wherefore we pray and bespeak the Heavenly Father take to His generous bosom the noble spirit of our friend, Albertus Brown.

Jesse Heslip,  
Thomas Farrell,  
L. E. Donovan,

Steve Fazekas,  
F. A. Carabin,  
Mary E. Gellen.

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## IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF LUCAS COUNTY, OHIO

IN RE MEMORIAL  
OF  
ALBERTUS BROWN,—LAWYER.

Honorable Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of  
Lucas County, Ohio, Fellow Members of the Bar:

My friends, we are face to face with the great mystery that shrouds the world. We question, but there is no reply. Out in the wide waste seas

there drifts no spar. Over the desert of death the Sphinx gazes forever,—but never speaks. In the June of life another heart has ceased to beat. Night has fallen upon noon. But Albertus Brown lived, he loved, he was loved. Wife and kin pressed their kisses upon his lips. This is enough. The longest life contains no more. This fills the vase of joy. Albertus Brown was cut down in the potent prime of his manhood in but Forty-six (46) years of life's service; he fought a good fight, he kept his faith, he finished his course and he crowded much of life into years: myriads of friends, banks of flowers massed at the Frederick Douglass Community House, demonstrated that he had lived to learn and had learned to live for others, before he passed the way of all flesh, which the world miscalls death.

In a recount and resume of his friendship and his fraternal affiliations they are dwarfed by the fact that the gospel as lived according to Albertus Brown was worthy of the highest scriptural ethics. His life was an epic. By dint of courage and work he mounted the ladder to the royal heights of a Christian gentleman and a scholar, winning the approbation and the seal of approval of the great and the love of the weak and lowly. He glorified his race and his manhood was a ministry before the altar of justice and a glorious plume in the crown of his life was,—THAT HIS WORD WAS HIS BOND.

He lived and labored for his fellowmen. He championed the weak and the poor against the strong and rich. He welcomed light. His face was ever toward the East. According to his light he lived. There is no language to express a nobler creed than this,—nothing can be grander, more comprehensive, near perfect. This was the creed that glorified his life and made his death sublime. He was afraid to do wrong, he was afraid to be afraid and for that reason he was not afraid to die;—and the memory of his generous deeds shine out like the stars. What words will do that life the justice that we know and feel. A heart breaks, a man dies, a leaf falls in the far forest, a babe is born and the great Cycle sweeps on. By the grave of man stands the angel of silence. No one can tell which is the better: life with its gleams and shadows, its thrills and pains, its ecstasy and tears, its wreaths and thorns, its crowns, its cross and Galgothas or death with its peace, its rest, its cool and placid brow and having within no memory or feeling of grief or pain. To this thinker of pure thoughts, speaker of brave words and doer of generous deeds we know has reached the haven that all dead have reached and where the voyage of life must end. But we do know that Albertus Brown did not see

His soul-house built of mud  
Go toppling to the dust—a vacant shrine!  
That when he faced the grisly Thing,  
His song did triumph down the gray Perhaps!  
He was a tune-swept fiddle string  
That feels the Master Melody—and snaps.

\*       \*       \*       \*

“Though through the years which lie ahead  
No heart shall ache, no cheek be wet,  
For any word that he has said  
Or profit he has tried to get.”

And all of our beloved dead we can truly say:—

“That we do not seek them within the tomb  
We shall not find them in the clay,  
But they pierced a little wall of gloom,  
To seek the day.

\*       \*       \*       \*

They brothered with the things that pass,  
Poor giddy Joy and puckered Grief;  
He went to brother with the Grass  
And with the sunning Leaf.

No death can sheathe us in a shroud;  
A joy-sword whetted keen with pain,  
We join the armies of the Cloud  
The Lightening and the Rain.

Though God and you shall interknit  
As rain and Ocean, breath and Air;  
And oh, the luring thought of it  
Is Prayer!"

Farewell, dear friend, the world is better for your life; the world is braver for your death although the greatest of us walk in shadow and that men are only fragments and that faults and failures mingle with the lives of all. Farewell, we loved you living, we love you now, your character survives; Goodness lives: Love is immortal. Your hands that helped are as holy as the lips that prayed.

Your Honors please and Members of the Bar in the fellowship with our friend, your Committee can only tell in feeble words his virtues and to lay with tenderness and tears his memory in the sacred sanctuary of the archives of this court.

Frank A. Carabin,  
Scott Stahl,  
W. H. McLellan,  
Jesse Heslip.

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**GOLDEN RULE LODGE No. 129, I. B. P. O. E. of W.**  
Elks' Rest, 25 North Erie Street

Toledo, Ohio, July 19, 1927.

Mrs. Albertus Brown,  
746 Norwood Ave.,  
Toledo, Ohio.

Dear Mrs. Brown:

We, the members of Golden Rule Lodge, wish to extend our deepest sympathy to yourself and family in your hour of sadness and to let you know that we also will miss him more than you will ever know, both as a true brother and adviser who was always ready to hear the cry of the afflicted and aid those in distress and was never too tired, busy or ill to give his time for the advancement of his Lodge; and we wish to leave this thought with you that "He does all things well."

Truly a Lodge of sorrow,  
Edward M. Clemens, Exalted Ruler,  
Harry E. Smith, Secretary.

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**GOLDEN RULE LODGE No. 129, I. B. P. O. E. of W.**  
Elks' Rest, 25 North Erie Street

Toledo, Ohio, July 19, 1927.

**RESOLUTIONS**

Whereas, God in His all wise judgment has taken from labor to reward

one whom to know was to admire and respect for his sterling, upright and just principles applied to all at all times;

And, Whereas, We feel that a great loss has been sustained by our Organization, and a vacancy created that will be a great task to fill and a member who gave his best at all times to the Order he loved; yet, we must boy to the Divine Power and say, "Thy will be done";

Therefore, Be It Resolved By The Members of Golden Rule Lodge No. 129 I. B. P. O. E. of W., That we unite with the bereaved wife and family in expressing our sorrow and extending our sympathy.

Edward M. Clemens, Exalted Ruler,  
Harry E. Smith, Secretary.

## MASONIC FRATERNITIES

Whereas, The Supreme Architect of the Universe has removed our beloved Frater, Albertus Brown, from our midst, and,

Whereas, Albertus Brown was a loyal and faithful member of the Amazon Lodge No. 4, F. and A. M. and Maumee Chapter No. 6, R. A. M., St. John's Commandery No. 5, K. T., Mecca Temple No. 43, N. M. S. and St. Matthew's Consistory No. 24, A. A. S. R. and also a highly respected citizen of this community, and,

Whereas, In his death, the Masonic Fraternity of Toledo has sustained an irreparable loss, therefore,

Be It Resolved, That we extend to his wife our heartfelt sympathy in her bereavement, and,

Be It Further Resolved, That she be presented with a copy of these Resolutions and a copy be placed on the minutes of the above mentioned Masonic bodies.

### Resolutions Committee:

L. H. Kimbrough,  
Thomas Taylor,  
E. J. Gatliff,  
W. H. Culpher,  
W. A. Jones.

July 31, 1927.

## THE UTOPIAN CLUB RESOLUTIONS

Whereas, It would be sacrilegious to call into question the divine Will and Omnipotence of God, and yet we are brought face to face with the stern reality of the frailties of life and the certainty of death;

And Whereas, It seems physically impossible to say and only can be said, when soothed and sustained by an unfaltering faith and trust that "Thy will be done," when a life of service, a life of sacrifice and a life spent in the defense of suffering humanity has been suddenly terminated with his work unfinished and his cherished and fondest ideals and ambitions yet to be realized;

And Whereas, Albertus Brown was a charter member of the Utopian Club, the framer of its Constitution and By-laws, and whose wise-given counsel, as from an ancient sage, provided the super-structure upon which we have endeavored to build;

Therefore, Be It Resolved, That we, the Board of Directors and Members of the Utopian Club, and the countless number of those who have enjoyed

the social, business and fraternal contact and have been benefited by the same, bow in humble submission to Him Who holds the destinies of man in His hand and Who loans us this frail existence we are wont to call life, and to Whom we must sooner or later give an account of our stewardship as Mr. Brown has done, yet unlike the man with the one talent, but rather like unto the man who was given the five and justly earned the welcomed approbation, "Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many; enter thou into the joys of thy Lord";

Therefore, Be It Resolved, That a copy of these Resolutions be spread on the Minutes of our Club and a copy be given to the bereaved family.

Lives of great men oft remind us,

We can make our lives sublime;

And departing leave behind us

Footprints on the sands of time.

J. A. Roberts,

E. Bruce Highwarden,

Dr. L. V. English,

Dr. R. F. Pulley, President,

John D. Morris, Secretary.

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### TOLEDO BRANCH, N. A. A. C. P.

321 Pinewood Avenue

July 20, 1927.

Since God, in His all divine wisdom, has seen fit to call unto himself Attorney Albertus Brown, who was the first president of the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and up to the time of his death, chairman of the Legal Redress Committee and also a member of the Board, we, the Executive Board, bow in humble submission to His will.

Whereas, We feel that Toledo has suffered a keen loss, yet we realize the influence of his great service to humanity will never die;

Whereas, His untiring efforts in helping to put over the program of the Toledo Branch will also be keenly felt,

Therefore, Be It Resolved, That we, the Members of the Executive Board of the Local Branch of the N. A. A. C. P., will cherish his memory forever and that his service will be a memorial more lasting, more beautiful than ever could be erected from material things.

Let It Further Be Resolved, That a copy of these Resolutions be spread upon the minutes of the association and that a copy be sent to his widow.

Respectfully submitted,

TOLEDO BRANCH OF N. A. A. C. P.

J. A. Roberts, President,

Ruth Castle, Secretary.

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### THE BALTIMORE URBAN LEAGUE

521 McMechen Street, Baltimore, Maryland

October 4, 1927.

Albertus Brown had a dream for colored Toledo. His vision of a great community center in which Negroes might demonstrate their ability to do things for themselves deserves to live. No more fitting memorial to Brown could be prepared by Toledo than the carrying on to completion of the work from which he was called too soon.

R. Maurice Moss,  
Executive Secretary.  
(Formerly Director)

To the Officers and Members of  
The Frederick Douglass Center:

After two years of work under your late president as Girls' Work Secretary, I found that I was able to know and understand his great ambitions to build up an institution which would benefit all those who came within its influence.

No greater tribute can we pay than to herald him as a leader; one who endured until the end with a faith in his race that passed all understanding.

He realized that success which is worth anything must come as a result of one's own efforts and not at the expense of someone else. For this reason, his was a constant struggle, a ceaseless battle to bring success from inhospitable surroundings, the price of his great achievement, The Frederick Douglass Community Center.

Well may we mourn our physical loss of the man—but let us hasten to "carry on."

"To lift up men, this was his aim,  
Away with pomp and pride and fame,  
Through light and darkness, fire and flame,  
To lift them up."

Louise Love Bromley,  
Monroe, Mich.  
(Formerly Girls' Worker)

## YOUNG MEN'S CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION CROCKER STREET BRANCH

12th and Crocker Streets

Des Moines, Iowa, October 20, 1927.

To Board of Governors,  
Frederick Douglass Community Center.

Gentlemen:

This is the first opportunity I have had to express myself to you in your tremendous loss in your beloved brother, friend and leader, Bert Brown, the philanthropist and friend of the underprivileged.

Something seems to whisper to me, yes, eternally, that Bert is not dead but just sleeping and still working anxiously on—so that your children and my children may be given a square shot and have a chance to live and to develop themselves as other children.

You, who have been tossed the torch from his fallen hands, must carry on to the end. You owe it to his memory, to his fine personal life and to his squareness and fairness to go until you too fall.

Yes, Bert Brown is dead. Yet he lives on in my heart, a youth, whom he has inspired. Now I am going to make good, because I believe he would have me make good. The one big chance of my life was given me by no other than our mutual friend, Bert Brown. Yes, thousands of youths were touched inwardly by that great fellow, who lived down even his faults and most severe criticisms.

He fought often singlehanded for the underdog. Oftimes he was misunderstood but his tenacity failed him not! Onward he went and upward, unstinted, unmoved and unselfishly. He is dead physically. But spiritually he lives in the hearts of thousands he has befriended.

Mere words are so inadequate to even give just a wee expression of my sincere regards and admiration intermingled with my utmost respect for that Great benefactor of Mankind, Atty. Albertus Brown. It has been such a strain for me to keep quiet. I told him while he lived how I cared for his squareness, now I am proud in all of my success to have this honor, rare

privilege and big opportunity to say that all that I am and hope to be I owe a great deal of it to the inspiration I received from Bert Brown.

Yes, I just pray that that little something—that still small voice will continue to whisper to me that Bert Brown is not dead but is living, yes, living in the hearts of thousands and especially in the uttermost part of my soul.

Yours very consolingly,

Gordon H. Kitchen,

Executive Secretary.

(Formerly Director)

GHK:DAH

## THE TOLEDO COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Richardson Building

November 4, 1927.

### AN APPRECIATION

Albertus Brown, lawyer, citizen, civic and social leader, is gone. While with us he gave himself with unceasing energy, consummate skill and unswerving devotion to whatever cause elicited his support. Especially did he devote himself with zeal, earnestness and persistence to what he conceived to be the best interests of the colored people in this city. The Frederick Douglass Community Center is one of the fruits of his labor and the manifold activities of this splendid organization are evidence that "he, being dead, yet speaketh."

He did not confine himself to labor among his own people for as a good citizen, he realized the importance of promoting good-will between the different races who are living side by side in Toledo. He, therefore, accepted a place on the Race Relations Department of the Toledo Council of Churches and for years was one of the most valued members of that department, whose efforts to establish a better understanding among these two races in our city have not been without favorable results.

We deplore his passing and regret deeply that we shall be deprived of his counsel, his service and his ever cordial spirit of co-operation.

R. B. Blyth,  
Executive Secretary.

## THE TOLEDO NEWSBOYS' ASSOCIATION

Newsboys' Building, 618 Superior Street

August 13th, 1927.

Bert is only a dear memory now, a very precious memory to many of us who knew, through close contact, the real worth of the man. His life was a real inspiration to me in my work with the under-privileged boys; his life and zeal for his people and what he accomplished in the face of discouraging handicaps, shames me into making new effort when I become discouraged in the work I am trying to do, because my work is a very discouraging one at times and I am often strongly tempted to give it up. Bert knew and understood the many unpleasant features of my life but I am still feeling the effect of his friendship and counsel as I carry on.

And I feel, dear friend, that we must do more than silently mourn his passing; we must do more than keep the flowers blooming on his tomb; to show that we are really sincere in our love for this wonderful character who burned out his life for others, we must make every effort to carry on the great work that he engaged in; it is a sacred duty and obligation of his friends and particularly the heritage of his beloved wife to see that the work of his life is advanced in every way possible.

Ever sincerely yours,

Lew Williams.

## EXTRACTS FROM LETTERS OF CONDOLENCE

"He was one of the finest characters on my list of friends, and our sorrow mingles with your greater grief because of his untimely taking off."

—Ex-Senator Charles Dick.

"The community has lost a good citizen. . . ."

—Walter H. Diemer, Pres.,

The American-National Co.

"To know him and realize his quiet strength and great goodness and usefulness was to admire him. Not only Toledo but the country has lost an eminent man."

—Addie W. Hunton,

Brooklyn, N. Y.

"His passing will be mourned by all of the Bar of Lucas County, as well as innumerable friends and clients. He was respected as an able lawyer, of high integrity and his word was taken as good as a government bond. Please accept the condolences of one of the many who feels that the world has lost a progressive citizen."

—Judge William A. Cuff.

"He made a large contribution toward the civic betterment of our people in Toledo, and the results of his efforts will be a real monument to his service."

—Ernest T. Attwell,  
Playground and Recreation Association.

"The loss of Attorney Brown will be felt tremendously by both the white and colored races of Toledo."

—The Rev. and Mrs. W. J. Henry, Pastor,  
Toledo Gospel Center.

"The community and the race will sadly miss your husband, who did so much especially for the colored boys and girls of Toledo, and who was ever ready to champion the cause of freedom."

—Robert W. Bagnall,  
National Ass'n for the Advancement of Colored People.

"The city has lost one of its best citizens; the race one of its staunchest fighters for right and justice."

—The Rev. L. P. Powell, Pastor,  
St. Paul A. M. E. Zion Church.

"But such a spirit, in that harrowed abode, to be freed of its impediments, (and we all know how he was harrowed physically), such a soul, I am sure, would not wish to see us grieve for this, his heavenly opportunity to soar in his inimitable way unfettered, to the glorious heights he so courageously had fought for and now has obtained."

—I. A. Eppstein, Pres.,  
The Federal Savings Ass'n.

"I feel much honored to have been associated with him in various activities from time to time and to have enjoyed his friendship. Albertus was one of God's noblemen and the entire community has sustained an irreparable loss by his passing. His influence for good will be felt for generations to come."

500159  —Morris Kobacker.

"May you be sustained in your grief in the knowledge that in the hearts of his people he still lives on."

—Otto H. Hohly.

"To know him was to admire and love him for his many admirable traits such as few men possess. It is indeed a pity that he could not have enjoyed a longer life, but you should find yourself consoled by the fact that he crowded into his forty-six years what other men cannot and do not crowd in at seventy years."

—I. Newton Mintz.

"It was a pleasure to have been numbered as one of his friends."

—Irving S. Frank.

"Mr. Brown was beyond doubt one of our most useful and forward looking citizens; his place in the community cannot easily be filled and I join with the city of Toledo in sharing with you your great grief."

—The Rev. B. F. McWilliams, Pastor,  
Third Baptist Church.

"All Toledo suffers a distinct loss, for his life and activities are among the powerful constructive forces for the good of our entire community. The value of his service cannot be over-estimated. Death cannot remove such a personality, but will make the inspiration of his life stronger through the years. May God bless and prosper the great work he initiated."

—Mrs. Robert C. Morris.

"We shall all miss him; not only the Negro Community, but the city as well. I am glad I was privileged to know him."

—The Rev. Harlan M. Frost, Pastor,  
Second Baptist Church.

"Mr. Brown is not dead, but lives in the respect and love of all who knew him. He will always hold an honorable place with Mizpah Chapter No. 27, I. B. P. O. of Moose."

—Lee Olma Porter, Secretary.

"I have found much of consolation in the thought that those who continue to live in the hearts they leave behind—though they may pass out beyond the sight of earth—DO NOT DIE. Therefore it is that Albertus is NOT DEAD. He is simply sleeping. Sleeping in a homelike place, with the peace of God upon his face. Albertus was my true and faithful friend, and I was his. Devoted and faithful to every trust, simple and winning in his ways, modest as a woman but brave as a lion in the assertion of his client's rights

'He taught the world that manhood stands

Upon the base of work and truth;

That loving hearts and toiling hands

Are God's ambassadors on earth.'

—Judge Byron F. Ritchie.

"The Dean and Faculty of Law have received with profound regret the news of the death of Counsellor Albertus Brown, who was a graduate of this school. The Alma Mater cannot restore your loss but in so far as such a thing is possible in human life, she shares it with you."

—James C. Waters, Jr., Secretary,  
Howard University School of Law.

"Another life sacrificed in a glorious work."

—Thomas Randall,  
Los Angeles, Calif.

OBITUARY

OBITUARY

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## TOLEDO BLADE

(July 18, 1927)

### ALBERTUS BROWN, PROMINENT COLORED CIVIC WORKER, DIES

#### Overwork Blamed for Death of Attorney Who Helped Organize Douglass Center Here; Funeral to Be Wednesday

Albertus Brown, 47, leading colored attorney and one of the best known and respected of his race in Toledo, died Sunday in his home, 746 Norwood Avenue.

He practiced law in Toledo 19 years and was one of the founders of the Frederick Douglass Community Center.

Although he had continued his law practice, his health had been failing the last two years. He had been confined to his home four weeks by a complication of diseases brought on by overwork.

Funeral services will be held at 1 P. M. Wednesday in the community center, in which his whole life was wrapped, at 16 North Tenth Street.

#### Born in Washington

The attorney was born in Washington and received his elementary and high school education in the Washington schools.

He sold newspapers on the streets of Washington while attending school, and in 1897, became a messenger for the Republican national committee. He later was clerk and stenographer for Senator Mark A. Hanna and served in the same capacity for Senator Charles Dick after Senator Hanna's death.

#### Studied Law at Night

While working for these two statesmen, Mr. Brown entered the night law school of Howard University, and was graduated in 1904. He came to Toledo after leaving the employ of Senator Dick in 1908.

Mr. Brown started the Toledo branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, and served as its president for two years. He was a member of the legal redress committee of the organization.

He was perhaps best known for his activity in behalf of the Frederick Douglass community center, which he served faithfully up to the time of his death.

#### Member of Bar

Largely through his untiring devotion to the institution, the mortgage of \$14,000 was paid off last fall through contributions of both colored and white friends.

Mr. Brown was a member of the Lucas County Bar Association, chairman and president of the board of the community center; member of the Toledo Race Relations Commission; member of Colored Masonic organizations; treasurer and secretary of the building committee of the Golden Rule Lodge of Elks; member of the Toledo Museum of Art and of Gamma Lambda Chapter, Alpha Phi Alpha of Detroit.

#### Body to Lie in State

The body will lie in state in the community center from 9 to 10 A. M. Wednesday.

Aaron Cohn, former municipal judge, is making arrangements for active and honorary pallbearers.

Mr. Brown is survived by his wife, Jessie W. Brown; sisters, Ada B. Conn and Bernadine Lee, and nephews, Albertus B. Conn, junior law student in the University of Michigan, and Clyde Freeman, Washington, D. C., and his foster parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Curry of Washington, D. C.

## TOLEDO PAYS LAST TRIBUTE AT ALBERTUS BROWN RITES

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Life of Colored Attorney Was an Inspiration,  
Declares Grove Patterson  
at Services

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Final tribute to Albertus Brown, colored attorney and race leader, was paid Wednesday in the Frederick Douglass Community Center, the institution made possible through his unceasing efforts.

Nearly 1,000 persons, white and colored, from many walks of life, overflowed from the auditorium into Tenth street, straining their ears to catch the words of eulogy which fell from the lips of the speakers.

Integrity, loyalty and courage were attributed to Mr. Brown by Aaron Cohn, former municipal judge. Grove Patterson, editor of the Blade, asserted that the departed attorney had vision, courage and faith.

## Life is Inspiration

"His life, to me, is an inspiration," said Mr. Patterson. "Laboring against great handicaps, he gave value to his own life by what he did for himself and others."

Mr. Brown's translation of his vision of the Douglass Center into reality has meant immeasurably much to his race, the editor said.

Declaring that Mr. Brown was the "greatest champion the colored people of Toledo have had in a long time," Judge Cohn commented upon the attorney's reputation for integrity in personal and professional circles. The former jurist also told how Mr. Brown "carried on" for many years, although failing in health.

Judge James Austin, Jr., of the court of domestic relations, who told of his relations with Mr. Brown as a neighbor, described him as an "idealist with his feet on the ground." If the attorney had been a white man, Judge Austin said, he would have "reached most any legal height in Toledo."

## Loss Keenly Felt

The loss of Mr. Brown through death has meant much to the colored race of Toledo and of the nation, declared John Dancey, colored, Detroit. Mr. Dancey said the race leader wanted to give children a chance in life, and to weld together the different racial groups in the city.

A new home for the colored lodge of Elks will be built soon, largely through Mr. Brown's foresight, said Jesse Heslip, colored attorney. Mr. Heslip asserted that his former associate at the bar never took an unfair advantage of an individual or circumstance, and was "the embodiment of Christian religion."

The invocation was given by Major W. T. Anderson, Mrs. Della Fields read the obituary. The Douglass Center Glee Club and Joe Murphy's Ice House quartet sang.

The effect on the colored community of Brown's passing was shown eloquently at the funeral Wednesday by the Douglass Association's floral tribute, an immense wheel without a hub.

There were other floral offerings that told what Brown had meant to his race, not only in Toledo, but thruout the nation. Elaborately arranged pieces were there from Washington, D. C., from Cleveland, Columbus, Philadelphia, Detroit, Chicago and many other cities. The flowers completely banked the front of the rostrum and extended around into the ante-room doorways and corners of the room on either side.

One of the outstanding designs was a large Elk emblem from the lodge of which Brown had been treasurer twelve years.

The speakers were Dr. W. T. Anderson of Cleveland; Grove Patterson, John Dancey, head of the Urban League in Detroit; Judge Aaron B. Cohn, Judge F. Heslip, Judge James Austin, Jr., and Lew Williams, director of the Toledo Newsboys' Association.

Mrs. Ruby Slaughter of Cleveland was the soloist and there were other musical features by the Douglass Center Glee Club and Joe Murphy's Ice House Quartet. Mrs. Della Fields read the obituary.

Brown, who died Sunday, was buried in Forest cemetery.

The Square and Compass Lodge No. 4, F. and A. M., of which Brown was a member, sent the floral square and compass which stood at the foot of the casket.

Alpha Delta Sigma fraternity boys served as ushers, and Alcayde Bromley was at the organ thruout the service.

### HE SERVED HIS PEOPLE

(Editorial, Blade, July 19, 1927)

Albertus Brown was a credit to the colored race.

It would be dishonest to say that a Negro "has as good a chance" in the United States as a white man. Since his coming to North America, now more than 300 years ago, he has occupied a difficult position. Fortunately, with the years, that position becomes less difficult. The spirit of prejudice gives way before the advancing spirit of reasonable co-operation.

Today the successful colored man does not lean upon the white man. He makes something of himself, for himself, by himself.

It was fundamental with Albertus Brown to preserve the self-respect of himself and of the colored race. He set out early in life to be somebody and to get somewhere. He succeeded. He took others with him. His influence in Toledo, his home city, was far-flung.

The Douglass Community Center, which was Mr. Brown's outstanding contribution to his race and times, is an institution of great usefulness. His tireless work for it hastened his death.

Albertus Brown's people have lost a staunch leader. His associates, white and colored, have lost a dependable friend.

### THE CHICAGO DEFENDER

3435 Indiana Avenue, Chicago

Office of

ROBERT S. ABBOTT

President

September 30, 1927.

Upon my first meeting with the late Albertus Brown, the well-known Attorney and civic worker, I was impressed with his magnetic personality. It seemed as if we had known each other for a number of years, and there sprang up at once, a friendship which lasted throughout the years. The heights to which he has arisen can be attained only by those with strength of character such as his, embodied with perseverance and sterling worth. In speaking of his rise to success, I cannot but think of his beloved widow, Mrs. Jessie W. Brown, who was with him every step of the way, always willing and ready to inspire and encourage him. I can truthfully say that one could not meet Albertus Brown without his life having been enriched by the contact.

Very truly yours,

L.

Robert S. Abbott.  
Sept. 9th, 1927.

## TOLEDO NEWS-BEE

(July 18, 1927)

## CITY MOURNS NOTED LAWYER

## Albertus Brown, Worker for Colored Residents, Dies in Home

Services for Attorney Albertus Brown, 46, one of the leading members of the colored race of the country, who died in his home Sunday morning, probably will be held on Wednesday. For 19 years he practiced law in Toledo. In addition he was one of the leaders in the National Association for the Advancement of the Colored Race and the Frederick Douglass Community Center of Toledo.

Brown, who has been ill several months, was born in Washington, D. C., and received his early education there.

While in high school he was named a messenger in the national Republican Committee headquarters, where he was associated with such notables as Senators Mark Hanna and Charles Dick. He was graduated from the Howard Law School in 1904 and three years later he came to Toledo.

With barely enough to pay room rent and buy meals, Brown came to Toledo without friends or influence and began the trying task of building up a law practice. For months he did not have a case, but was determined to establish himself. He finally succeeded and he built up a lucrative practice.

Brown had no children and his great ambition was to build the Frederick Douglass Recreation Center building at Pinewood Avenue and 13th Street, so all the colored children of Toledo would have a worth-while place to enjoy wholesome recreation. The property has been acquired and Brown hoped to crown his life's work by raising the money to finance the building.

He was a member of the Lucas County Bar Association, the Toledo Race Relations Commission, the Colored Masons, Shriners and Elks and the Gamma Lambda Chapter of the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity. He leaves his widow, Jessie W. Brown; two sisters, Ada B. Conn and Bernadine Lee, both of Washington, D. C., and two nephews, Albertus Brown Conn, a junior at the University of Michigan, Clyde Freeman, Washington, D. C. and his foster parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Curry of Washington, D. C.

Prosecutor Steve Fazekas and Attorneys L. E. Donovan, Jesse Heslip, Thomas Farrell and Frank Carabin were named Monday in municipal court to draft a resolution on the death of Albertus Brown. The court cited Brown as an honored member of the Lucas County Bar Association.

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TOLEDO TIMES

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NOTED TOLEDO LAWYER DIES

## Albertus Brown Is Victim Of Complication Of Diseases

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(July 18, 1927)

Albertus Brown, 46, of 746 Norwood avenue, died at his home Sunday morning from a complication of diseases, brought on by overwork. He had practiced law in Toledo for the past 19 years.

Born September 17, 1880, in Washington, D. C., he received his early education in the schools of the Capital.

He sold newspapers on the streets of Washington for seven years while attending school, and thus supported and clothed himself. While in High

school he became a messenger in the Republican national committee, serving Hon. Marcus A. Hanna and later Col. Charles Dick in the capacity of clerk and stenographer.

In 1901 he entered the night law school of Howard university and graduated in 1904. After Mr. Hanna's death, he served Senator Charles Dick and for him he looked after all pension matters affecting bills and bills to correct military and naval records in congress.

Coming to Toledo he entered the practice of law, but his experience in organization again asserted itself and he, with other public spirited men of his race, founded, in 1919, the Frederick Douglass Community Center for boys and girls.

Albertus Brown was a member of the Lucas County Bar association, Toledo Race Relations commission, and the Toledo Art Museum. He was a 32 degree Mason, a Shriner, a member of Golden Rule Lodge of Elks and of the Gamma Lambda chapter, Alpha Phi Alpha.

## RACES JOIN IN MOURNING FOR LATE ATTORNEY

### Thousands Pay Last Tributes to Albertus Brown at Rites

(News-Bee, July 21, 1927)

Thousands of Toledoans, white and colored, visited the Frederick Douglass Community Center at 10th and Washington Streets, Wednesday, to pay their last respects to Albertus Brown, colored attorney, whose body lay in state there.

All day the stream of mourners poured in and out of the frame building front whose platform Brown had encouraged and cheered his people on to greater efforts socially and educationally. He had hoped to build a recreational center large enough and well enough equipped to accommodate all of the colored children in Toledo, on the spot where the center stands.

## FUNERAL WEDNESDAY FOR ALBERTUS BROWN

### Honorary Pallbearer List Arranged By Judge Aaron B. Cohn

(July 18, 1927)

FUNERAL services for Albertus Brown, for 19 years a Toledo attorney, will be held at the community center at 16 North Tenth street, Wednesday at 1 p. m.

The body of the well known lawyer will lie in state from 10 a. m. until noon Wednesday at the community center, where it was Brown's hope to erect a recreational building for use of all the Negro children in Toledo.

Major W. T. Anderson, U. S. A. retired, assisted by Dr. T. D. Scott, will officiate at the service.

A list of honorary pallbearers has been compiled by Judge Aaron B. Cohn, former municipal judge, and includes Judge James Austin, Thomas A. De-Vilbiss, Grove Patterson, James Dunn, J. D. Robinson, Joe Murphy, William Booker, Dr. I. A. Eppstein, Dr. C. H. Ferguson, Clarence Hackley, John D. Steward, Rev. Stephen Mahon, Frank Mulholland, W. A. Gosline, Dr. Charles Green and John Dancey, of Detroit, Colonel B. O. Davis, U. S. A., Cleveland, and Frank Saunders.

Active pallbearers are Everett J. Gatliff, W. C. Fox, James Slater Gibson, Jesse S. Heslip, Dr. L. V. English and Wilbur Randolph.

## THOUSAND PRESENT AT ALBERTUS BROWN FUNERAL

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(July 21, 1927)

The funeral of Albertus Brown, well-known attorney, who died Sunday, drew nearly 1,000 persons to the Frederick Douglass Community center, North Tenth street, Wednesday afternoon.

The body rested in state at the community center for two hours prior to the funeral.

Among the speakers were Jesse Heslip, John Dancey, Judge James Austin, Jr., Grove Patterson and Judge Aaron B. Cohn.

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## HISTORY OF THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS COMMUNITY CENTER

In order to carry out what he considered one of the most important obligations of the grown-ups of Toledo, their obligation to the young folks, the late Albertus Brown started this movement. After meeting a number of people on the street, in their homes and offices and letting them know of his idea, a meeting was held at 309 Superior St. (Perry's Lunch Room), at which time about twenty-five people were present. At this meeting Mr. Brown outlined his plans for meeting this obligation and steps were made toward the raising of funds. As a result in a few days Twelve Hundred Dollars were raised for equipment and operating expenses. Thus in 1919 there was a great need for such an institution.

The world war had just ended, pool and billiard parlors and the like abounded. The seven day needs of the people were not being met by the Church and Sunday School. All agreed some other agency was required, but there was sharp division between those who wanted colored branch Y. M. C. A.'s and Y. W. C. A.'s and those who wanted an independent organization that would be wholly Negro, all understanding the refusal of white institutions to accept the Negro. The group first referred to, met, talked and resolved, expressing the desire first to procure a Y. M. C. A., then a Y. W. C. A. The other group met, talked, raised \$1200, in actual money, rented a room and started activities. This latter group was of opinion that the one institution would accommodate the immediate needs of both sexes.

The Toledo War Chest took hold of the infant movement in 1920, allotting \$2400 for the year. Thus helped, there was procured through the Urban League at New York a young man to direct the activities, and the work with boys and young men was placed on a firm basis. A Boy Scout Troop was started, and put under way and the Douglass Center Boys' band. The band has taken part in civic parades and escorted on marches many local organizations.

Opportunity offered and the old church building at No. 15 N. 11th St. was procured. Here it was possible to install a basketball court and additional activities. In 1921 the name was changed to THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS COMMUNITY CENTER and enlarged the program in order to include a program for girls and women. It was felt that both sexes could be cared for in the one institution in a community having 10,000 Negroes, provided six contacts were carefully supervised. Through the Urban League at New York a trained woman worker was now obtained and with two full-time trained

employes, any number of part time employes and many volunteers began a full-time program which compared favorably with other institutions.

Girl and Boy Scouts, sewing and handicraft classes, classes in gym. and dramatic arts, glee clubs, high school fraternities, hiking groups, Big Sister clubs, band, orchestra, baseball and basketball teams, tennis groups, marble contests, pool, boxing, Kodak, reading, and other classes.

1921-1924 were three wonderful years in this history. Activities were going ahead like a house afire. New friends of both races coming to the fore; new fields of activity opening up; membership growing by leaps and bounds; a new community spirit being aroused and folks coming to feel their obligation owed to the coming generation; and just when everything seemed so auspicious the building occupied was sold and the new owner boosts the rent to \$100 per month beyond the former figure. After considerable thought, parleying and negotiating, all to no purpose July 1, 1924 ended the career of the Center at No. N. 15 11 St. With no new quarters immediately available, the Board canvassed the situation, then decided to drop the regular employees suspend activities and put the effects in storage. Some said such a step was fatal and that the Center would never resume, that the end of the string had been approached.

The Advisory Board, which is composed of forty leading white men and women of the community, were called together at the Commerce Club and told of our plight. The Community Chest had already been advised of the decision to suspend activities, drop employees, etc., and had been commended for taking so brave a position. The advisory board unanimously decided this was too important work to stop; steps to advance and resume were taken. Messrs. Joe Murphy, Grove Patterson and T. A. DeVilbiss formed themselves into a volunteer committee, agreed to raise \$10,000 toward a permanent site for the Center, provided the Negro was sufficiently interested to raise a like amount. The Negroes present accepted the proposition and agreed to raise the required \$10,000.

The institution had not a notion that the white committee felt perfectly safe in making its proposition—that it would never be put to the necessity of raising the \$10,000 agreed upon. It was decided the contract would be kept. Everybody got busy at once in every possible way. Picnics and boat rides, rummage and paper sales, style shows, baby contests, donations, memberships, all were resorted to and in August, 1925, the amount raised was \$10,000. As the amount stated was neared, the committee was advised of the progress and surprise was evinced. There was a sudden stir of activity, but no great trouble was experienced, for each of the committee put up \$500 himself, and like amounts came from such citizens as J. D. Robinson, Frank Stranahan, C. O. Miniger, J. N. Willys, Alfred Koch, Sam Davis, S. O. Richardson, Tiedtke Bros., Geo. Ford, Henry Page, Mrs. Wm. Hardee, Mrs. C. Brown and many others.

August 20, 1925, \$20,000 was paid down on the centrally-located S. W. Corner of Pinewood and 13th St. (122 x 100 feet). Toledo Real Estate Board appraised the property at \$32,000 and we purchased it for \$34,000. To complete, the Toledo Trust Co. loaned us \$14,000, and took a mortgage for three years, which was paid in November, 1926.

This corner property is an ideal location for a Community Center. It is constantly enhancing in value and is convenient to a half-dozen city car lines. It is far enough out and yet not too far from the down-town section of the city. The buildings now on the property bring in monthly a rental of \$250.00. This property was bought August 20, 1925. Three months later, Nov. 20, 1925,

\$3,000 was paid on the principal; Feb. 20, 1926, \$2,000 more was paid; April 1, 1926, a payment of \$1,000 was made, and another \$1,000 was paid July 1, 1926. Interest and taxes were met in addition to these payments. This left us \$7,000 in debt on our site. Remember, we first raised \$1,200 in 1919 to start this movement; that several years thereafter the Negro group raised \$10,000 to match a like amount from the white group; that since down-payment was made another \$14,000 has been raised and paid; so that to this time the Negro has raised and paid \$24,000. Today the \$34,000 has been paid and we are free of all debt.

The relations with the Toledo Community Chest have been and are very pleasant. The first budget was \$2,400; the one for the current year is \$10,000. Being subjected to the same scrutiny the other 37 agencies receive, so you must conclude the Center has been found worthy of larger confidence—larger budgets.

Being affiliated with The National Playground and Recreation Association of America, The Boys' Club Movement, "The Big Sister," Boy and Girl Scouts of America, co-operate the Juvenile Court, Council of Churches and other local agencies, and each day contacts are making friends in various new directions.

In April the name was changed to THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION OF TOLEDO, OHIO, operating thereunder:

The Frederick Douglass Community Center and Affiliated Clubs.

The Douglass Center Neighborhood Clubs.

The Douglass Center "Spiritual" Chorus.

The Douglass Center Boys' Band.

Douglass Center Girl and Boy Scouts.

Douglass Center Orchestra.

Douglass Center Sunday "Twilight" Meetings.

Annual membership is \$1.00 to \$5.00.

Contributing membership is \$5.00 to \$25.00.

Sustaining membership is \$25.00 to \$100.

Life membership is \$100.00 or more.

To Quote Directly From Our Founder:

Many advantages will accrue from such a building as we expect to erect. We want it practical and substantial, rather than particularly ornate. There is urgent need on our part for a sizable auditorium, a place for conventions, mass-meetings, recitals, theatricals and other gatherings. The renting of such a place for dances and the like would bring revenue that would help pay for the building. There would be quarters for our band and orchestra, now under the practical direction of Alcayde Bromley, of Monroe, Mich., a trained musician and instructor. Finally, there would be a place where Negro boys and girls could learn to swim, which opportunity to this time has been denied them.

Recalling we are not a "branch" of some established white institution which fact caused many of our friends to opine we would die abornin', that white people would not give a dollar toward a Negro institution over which they did not exercise supervision, the progress we have made is remarkable. We had to fight our own group into supporting us before we dared approach the other group for help. We have reached our present estate through deeds rather than words. We have grown in the esteem of this community, and come to be regarded as one of Toledo's fixtures.

We are responsible for a better community spirit; through our Sunday afternoon meetings, to which have come the best of all the races, better

racial relations have come about; at our "Mother-Daughter" and "Father-Son" banquets never less than 300 are seated at the tables. We observe religious and other occasions; we honor our graduates from the school system; we have developed local and inter-city athletics; we are creating love for the "Negro Spiritual" and all good music, and above all else we are dedicated to the task of discovering and developing talent.

David Belasco is a great artist, also a great showman. Writing in "Liberty" he says: "Intimate contact with the Negro the past several months has convinced me the theatre of tomorrow must reckon with another force—the race of Ham." The Douglass Community Association will help bring this about. The very best White and Negro peoples of Toledo are behind this movement, and we are grateful for the friendships we have made. Our foundation is such that when properly equipped we may reach out and serve this entire community. We have builded that foundation slowly but surely. Accomplishments speak a language of their own, and if our future is to be judged by our past, we shall help materially to brighten and better this city as the years come and go. What has been done was done in inadequate quarters with little or no equipment. With a "WORKSHOP" such as is planned at Pinewood and 13th St., we shall help make better citizens, develop artizans and workers, for the school-room, desk and shop, teach the dignity of all labor, do a piece of work of which Toledo and its citizenry shall be proud, and have an Institution which shall be pointed out as a model for other cities to pattern after. And when this building comes we shall appreciate and use it, for one appreciates what he helps produce, and into this has gone our love, our labor, our little money, our time, our tears; and it will not be a case of having something wished upon us.

A new deal is on everywhere. A new Negro is here. For the first time in history a Negro has been made President of Howard University at Washington. Toledo needs and must have the institution for which we are laboring. We have earned the earnest consideration of all those whose wish it is to help those who help themselves. Encouraging, fostering and promoting the ideal of SERVICE as the basis of all worthy enterprise; the spiritual, moral, physical, social, educational and industrial welfare of the boys, girls, men and women of Toledo, and seeking to establish JUSTICE, PRUDENCE, TEMPERANCE and FORTITUDE, we simply cannot FAIL.

SELAH

Everett W. Johnson,  
Executive Secretary.



The Douglass Center Parent's Club   The Douglass Center Sunday "Twilight" Meetings  
The Douglass Center "Spiritual" Chorus   The Douglass Center Boy's Band  
The Douglass Center Boy and Girl Scouts   The Douglass Center Orchestra  
The Douglass Center Parent's Club   The Douglass Center Sunday "Twilight" Meetings

#### OPERATED BY

# THE FREDERICK DOUGLASS COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION, INC., OF TOLEDO, OHIO

(Founded By The Late ALBERTUS BROWN)

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W. C. Fox, Treasurer  
Mrs. Della H. Fields, Secretary

Everett W. Johnson, Executive Secretary  
Phone, MAin 7476  
16 North Tenth Street  
Toledo, Ohio

Mrs. Drusilla E. Clemens, 1st Vice-Pres.

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